Hon. John Conyers
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

7/29/92

Dear John,

George Lardner sent me copies of the two Russell Archive memos disclosed to you for your hearing. They have significance of which you may not have been informed. There is what I regard as quite a Byzantine story about them. It could have made a sensation at the hearing!

Senator Russell encouraged me until his dying day to expose the error of the Warren Report. Our relationship began when I put into his hands proof that someone, probably J. Lee Rankin, memory-holed the record Russell was making for history. The two memos dated 9/16/64 are clearly his preparation for what he was going to say at the Commission's last executive session two days later. One did say. He told me so.

Rankin certainly is responsible for the absence of the court reporter when Russell and the others assumed that as at all prior executive sessions a transcript was made.

But as soon as I saw the first page of the supposed transcript I knew it was a fake apparently created in the expectation that the busy members would recognize that it was a transcript and lay it aside. What followed the first page is a partial and quite limited paraphrase that makes no reference to Russell's very strong objection to the Commission's basic conclusion, the so-called "single-bullet theory." If I remember correctly Senator Cooper's opposition was about as strong as Russell's and that of Congressman Boggs was less rigid.

Russell asked me to get the proof that there was no other version and his archive discloses that I provided it.

He was in terminal illness then. When he knew death was close he went public on Cox TV with his doubts and misgivings, to the degree he considered proper.

The reference to McCone is to an utter insanity foisted off on the CIA anxious to get it, a complete fabrication by a man who worked for Sanoza's intelligence in which he alleged that he saw and overheard the Cuban Mexico City embassy paying Oswald to kill JFK. If Ambassador Mann had had his way World War III would have been a distinct possibility! That is a long story for which I do not take your time. I have the documents. Hoover and the FBI spotted that man and his story as fakes. His name is Gilverto Alvarado Ugarte. The FBI's pressure led to his confesion that he had made it all up, which is obvious. But Mann never lost his faith in it, pressed for strong action against Cuba even after it was proven to be a fake.

I published some of this years ago, copy enclosed, with slips to mark the places for you.

When they are out I'd appreciate copies of your hearings and the report for archival purposes. By about a dozen FOIA lawsuits I got about a third of a million pages of mostly FBI records relating to the JFK and King assassination. They will all be a public archive

at local Hood College, small but excellent, with as modern a library as there is. They plan to make all available to other institutions via modern gadgetry I do not understand.

The last time you saw me was the last time I was in Washington for other than medical purposes. I then and for some time had been incubating serious illness that, along with too many since then, I've been able to survive. I'm 79 how and severely limited in what I can do.

If this is of interest to you and you'd like more information, to the degree it is now possible for me I'll be glad to provide it.

McCone, I should have said, was spreading the Alvarada fabrication all around the government and it scared some in the FBI.

Russell's handwritten note dated December 5 probably, among other things, refers to what Katsenbach had said in that day's first executive session about the FBI. The Archives can provide a copy and if you'd prefer, I can. I forced them to disclose all but one to me. That one is withheld on the fictitious claim to the need to protect Norman Redlich's reputation. Bull! They'd disclosed about 300 pages of the most virulent racism about him. The real reason for its continued withhold is to protect Gerald Ford, who was the running dog for those racists. Including, as I recall, a former colleague of yours, Sawyer, later on the House assassins committee.

There is a bit more on our (Thank God!) only unlected President in the book that may interest you.

While I am certain that the media has not reported all the fine things you do, some are and I take this opportunity to thank you for them.

With profounf respect and appreciation,

Harold

Harold Weisberg